

WASHINGTON STAR
26 JUL 1973

Colby Pressed By Senators on Watergate Role

By THOMAS B. ROSS
Chicago Sun Times Service

President Nixon's nominee for director of the Central Intelligence Agency faces more heavy questioning about his role in the Watergate affair.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) led the nominee, William R. Colby, through four hours of intensive interrogation at a closed meeting of the Senate Armed Services Committee yesterday.

Later, Kennedy told reporters that Colby was designated as the CIA's chief coordinator of Watergate matters after the break-in at Democratic National Committee headquarters 13 months ago.

KENNEDY said he asked Colby about his dealings with White House aides H. R. Haldeman, John D. Ehrlichman and John W. Dean III as well as with the Watergate prosecutors.

Kennedy did not reveal Colby's response, but he indicated he was not completely satisfied. He said he remained undecided on how he would vote when Colby's nomination was presented to the full Senate.

The committee is expected to approve the nomination of Colby, but the Senate may still have to act on Colby's nomination. The Armed Services Committee, public relations and other factors may influence the final vote.

Colby's nomination is a major step in the process of appointing a new director of the CIA, a position that has been vacant since the resignation of Richard M. Helms.

concession, was permitted to sit in on the secret hearing at his request.

Kennedy was prepared also to question Colby at length on his role as head of the pacification program in Vietnam. Colby has been accused of condoning assassination, torture and imprisonment of political enemies of the Saigon regime in his management of the Phoenix Project, which was part of the pacification program.

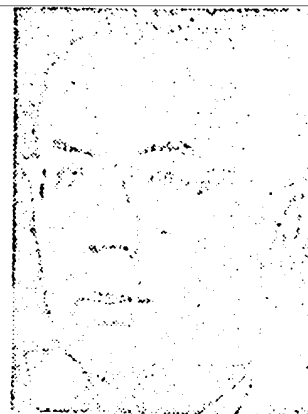
COLBY headed the program from 1963 to 1971. He returned to CIA headquarters here to become executive director for control, a position which put him logically in line to be named Watergate coordinator. Early this year, he was promoted to chief of the operations directorate, the "department of dirty tricks."

Nixon proposed him as director in April to succeed James R. Schlesinger Jr., who became Defense secretary in the top level reshuffle that took place after the Watergate scandal broke.

Kennedy reportedly concentrated his questioning on two key events:

Colby's role in advising Gen. Robert B. Cushman Jr., Marine commandant and former deputy director of the CIA, to clear his name to the public with the FBI on being given it to the federal prosecutor.

Colby's role in the investigation to make a report of by whom the CIA had lost the FBI case documents. It had



WILLIAM COLBY

turned over to the Justice Department.

The CIA repeatedly has insisted it had no involvement in the Watergate break-in or coverup. But Robert C. Mardian, former assistant attorney general and a Nixon campaign aide, testified last week that a CIA official told him he would "stake his life" on the fact that the agency had a role in the break-in.

Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi (D-Mich.), chairman of the House Intelligence subcommittee, has said he has doubt as to whether the CIA went along at first with White House efforts to deflect the Watergate investigation.